

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 22 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend Claims 16-21 as follows.

1-15. (Cancelled)

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16. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus comprising:

illumination means for illuminating an eye fundus area including a specified target region area;

image taking means for taking the image of ~~said~~ the specified region eye fundus area and thereby outputting an image signal;

~~process condition determination means for determining a process condition based on a signal in the vicinity of said specified region, contained in the output of the signal of said image taking means or in the result obtained by processing said output signal~~

signal processing means for processing and normalizing the image signal, based on a condition determined in accordance with the outputted image signal from said image taking means;

~~region extraction means for extracting said specified region according to said process condition determination means~~

position determination means for determining the position of the target area based on an output of said signal processing means; and

auto tracking means for executing automatic tracking of ~~said specified region~~, the position of the target area based on ~~the~~ an output of said ~~region extraction~~ position determining means.

17. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the signal of ~~said specified region~~ the target area indicates a vessel image, and said ~~process condition determination~~ signal processing means is adapted to extract ~~the~~ a signal of said a portion of the vessel image ~~portion only~~ and to execute a normalization process for varying the gain ~~according to~~ based on the signal of ~~said~~ the portion of the vessel image ~~portion~~.

B/ 18. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said ~~process condition determination~~ signal processing means includes normalizing range setting means for setting an effective range of the normalization process for varying the gain, ~~according to~~ based on the signal of ~~said~~ the portion of the vessel image ~~portion~~.

19. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said ~~process condition determination~~ signal processing means includes normalizing range varying means for varying ~~an effective range of the normalization process~~ a size of a region of normalizing to vary ~~for varying~~ the gain, ~~according to~~ based on the signal of ~~said~~ the portion of the vessel image ~~portion~~.

20. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said normalizing range varying means is adapted to vary ~~the effective range of the~~

~~normalization process according to the~~ a size of a region of normalizing in accordance with a  
diameter of ~~said~~ the vessel image.

21. (Currently Amended) An ophthalmic apparatus according to ~~claim 17~~ claim  
16, wherein, in ~~said~~ the normalization process, the gain is varied from a predetermined period  
after ~~the~~ a start of automatic tracking, and is thereafter fixed ~~maintained~~ constant.

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22. (Cancelled).